

INKATHA YENKULULEKO YESIZWE
KGARE YA TOKOLOHO YA SETJHABA
NATIONAL CULTURAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

PRESIDENTIAL GREETINGS

ULUNDI. 23RD JUNE 1990

The National Chairman, Comrade Secretary-General, Comrade Deputy Secretary-General, Comrades, today I look back over the past 15 years with a great sense of nostalgia. A lot of you have been with me since Inkatha was first started and a great many of you have been with me many years and you will all be aware of the vast political terrains which Inkatha has traversed since it was first raised up in 1975.

Let me state for the record what I am nostalgic about. I am nostalgic about that vibrant Inkatha that came into existence on the eve of that new phase in South African political history which commenced with the events of June 16th 1976. It was on that day that Black politics exploded into what would turn out to be a violent last quarter of the 20th century. Inkatha stood firm in its original commitment to non-violent tactics and strategies and to pursue the time-honoured objectives of the Black struggle for liberation through peaceful means.

I look back with nostalgia at the vibrant Inkatha that doubled its size in 1976-77 in the face of every prediction that Inkatha would be obliterated by the growth of Black Consciousness thinking and the development of the politics of protest/confrontation.

In the 1977-78 period not only was the doom of Inkatha forecast as a certainty but the fall of the South African Government was confidently forecast. Again, Inkatha's membership which had doubled the previous year re-doubled. I remember with nostalgia the vigorous growth which make Inkatha yet again re-double on its re-doubled figures the following year.

Those were the years of the spread and the growth of Inkatha and the establishment of a grass-root political organisation. Those were the years of Black South Africans showing the world that the armed struggle was not necessary and that membership-based,

democratically organised, grass-root organisations could survive the onslaught of the worst that the State could do.

Comrades, I am nostalgic about that vigorous growth power of Inkatha during the 1976-78 period because there is in me an excitement at the prospects of Inkatha this year making the historic transition from being a liberation movement into becoming a national political Party. I am nostalgic because the new challenge we face in establishing Inkatha as a political Party is so reminiscent of the challenge we faced in 1975 to establish Inkatha as a Movement.

Then there was the politics of euphoria building up to claim that the South African Government could be put on the run by confrontation and violence. There is today the euphoria that revolutionaries will win the day when the South African Government will have to bow to them.

Then there was the confident, bold publicly-stated convictions that Inkatha was a lost cause and it would be obliterated politically. Today there is the same claim. Then there was a ganging up of Black Consciousness organisations and youth organisations to adopt a common antagonism towards Inkatha. There is today a ganging up of organisations around the ANC to do just this.

We are really seeing history repeating itself and, Comrades, I tell you today that we will see history repeat itself and we will see that Inkatha is actually indestructible in front of violent onslaughts.

I am also nostalgic today about the great things that Inkatha has done in its 15 years of existence. From nothing it has grown into a force that is indomitably present on the centre-stage of South African politics and it will remain there because it has a job of work to do there which the people want done there.

This is the last Central Committee we will be holding with Inkatha being its old self as a broad-based liberation movement. At this forthcoming Annual General Conference of Inkatha, we will be opening the doors of Inkatha to admit members of all race groups in the country. We can do this now that the Separate Amenities Act has been scrapped and now that other black organisations and a great many black leaders have been released from jail. We can now open our membership up because apartheid is doomed and because the South African Government has gone past all points of return in a process which must end up scrapping the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act.

I want today to draw attention to some of the issues which are involved in opening up Inkatha's membership and in re-launching Inkatha as a new Inkatha and as a political Party. A lot more is involved than simply addressing the race issue as it relates to membership. So much is involved that I do in fact propose that we put the question of opening up Inkatha's membership to all race groups as a principle which must be decided upon, and if the principle is agreed to - as I am sure it will be agreed to - we must put to Conference the need to establish a new Inkatha as a political Party with a radically revised constitution which will enable that to take place.

We cannot alter Inkatha's constitution at this year's Conference. There is just no time to do so. Our constitution demands that we give a month's notice of any intention to alter the constitution. It is not simply this one month's notice which presents a time problem. We just do not have time to go into the detail that should be included in the amendments to the constitution.

I make the point, Comrades, that we are going to alter Inkatha's constitution and we must, I believe, alter it in such a way that it will stand the test of time. Inkatha is a force to be reckoned with. It has an identity which is now historically endorsed. It is going to go into the politics of negotiation and I am quite sure Inkatha is going to emerge after negotiations to fight an election, either as part of an alliance or on its own. Whichever way that wind blows after the politics of negotiation, Inkatha will be there as Inkatha and it will be there for a long time to come.

I believe that there is great wisdom in establishing an Inkatha Constitution Commission to draw up a constitution for the new Inkatha Party. We in Inkatha have discovered the necessity of looking at what others do wherever others produce successes. We are going to have a multi-Party democracy in this country. Let us look at the kind of constitutions other political Parties have who survived the decades of changing politics in the democracies in which they exist.

Let our Constitution Commission make a comparative study of the constitutions of the great democratic parties of the world and then let them review the constitutions of South African political Parties with which we will have to contend as opponents in any elections which follow negotiations. Let us gather the wisdom of the ages and let us gather the wisdom of the world, and then let us sit down and apply that wisdom to our own constitution.

I have already proposed that Inkatha hold another General Conference in December this year. I would like to suggest to members of the Central Committee that we do in fact need this six month period in which to make a proper and sound adjustment to the new political circumstances as they are emerging before our eyes.

Let us take a number of practical issues. In July this year we open up our membership to all races. This means that we should entertain having all race representation on Inkatha's Central Committee, Inkatha's National Council and it means that we should ensure that white members are not just some kind of appendage to what really is the old black Inkatha organisation.

Now Comrades, I reject the principle of appointing Whites simply because they are Whites. That is a form of racism I have never accepted. I have also never accepted the appointment of Blacks to important posts simply because they are Blacks. Inkatha's future and South Africa's future depend on merit being the determining factor of who does what.

This year we have to re-elect Inkatha's President and all its office bearers. We have to do so every five years and this July marks the end of a five-year period. White, Indian and Coloured members will only be approved by this year's Conference. They are ipso facto excluded from consideration for election to office during this year's proceedings.

I would like to make the proposal that we open Inkatha's constitution and that I as President be entrusted with dropping some of the old Central Committee members and bringing in some new blood by making nominations for Central Committee membership from among our new White, Indian and Coloured members of standing who have the kind of competence we need.

Let us then give our White, Coloured and Indian members an adjustment period within which they can integrate themselves fully in the affairs of Inkatha and demonstrate their merit. Let us give our new members this six month period between now and December and then in December, let us put before the General Conference a new constitution which I am sure will affect Inkatha's Executive structures and let us then hold elections for office bearers to serve in the new Inkatha.

Comrades, I would like to propose that at the first meeting of the Central Committee after this year's Annual General Conference, we appoint the Inkatha Constitution Commission and give it a set of objectives which arise out of our wisdom during and after Conference.

So much seems to be happening at once. At this year's Conference we will be electing Inkatha's President and its office bearers. We will be making a transition from being a broad-based Movement to becoming a political Party with an election-winning structure which is constituency based. We are also opening up our membership and

embarking upon a whole new experience of making our political presence felt as a non-racial democratic political Party.

These are momentous developments inside Inkatha and they take place in a very momentous set of circumstances which politics at large is producing for South Africa as a whole.

Comrades, I want to pause here and say that everything that I am talking about is so momentous and so important, not only for South Africa but for the whole of South Africa that we can let nothing deter us and let nothing dissuade us from going ahead as we have envisaged doing.

Nothing must deter us from producing a viable effective alternative political force among other political forces so that South Africans have a real choice to make when it comes to deciding who to support in the politics of negotiation, and then later deciding who to support in elections which will follow. I say very bluntly, Comrades, that if Inkatha does not present South Africa with alternatives, there will be no alternatives and there will be no real democracy.

A combined ANC, SACP, UDF, COSATU force can politically walk over whatever organisations they like in South Africa except Inkatha. This front will trample over every other organisation in its drive to be the sole arbiter of how the oppressed deal with the National Party Government. If Inkatha were not there, this is what the ANC would do and it would do so because it wants to be in a position in which it could mobilise strikes for political purposes; it could mobilise national stay-aways for political purposes and it could spread violence for political purposes wherever it wanted to do so.

We see it right now. The ANC has decided to make a last desperate attempt to annihilate Inkatha politically and to sweep it out of existence. They have already announced their very intention to employ the very tactics I am talking about. Their crushing of Inkatha is seen by them as a first step to crushing all opposition to anything they stand for. They dream of a situation in which they are capable of crushing Inkatha and then turning to crush the ruling National Party. That is the kind of grandiose thinking which is so tragically there.

It is now common knowledge that the ANC, UDF, COSATU front is going to attempt to call for national action in stay-aways and in strike action which is aimed at intimidating big business out of any support for Inkatha and intimidating the South African Government into what they hope will be my removal from office and the disbanding of the KwaZulu Police Force.

They have announced their intention and they are now preparing to use the tactics of force and coercion to gain a Party political goal. They are now practising the politics they will employ against the National Party afterwards.

Comrades, they would like nothing better than to annihilate Inkatha and start doing so by disrupting or downgrading this year's Annual General Conference. Originally when they set their dates Inkatha's Conference would have been held on the 6th, 7th and 8th July. They have geared their regional and national action to culminate on the 7th July. This hideously undemocratic employment of the politics of intimidation and violence just must not be allowed to work.

Comrades, our answer to this threatened action must be palpably militant. We must say no never. We must say that this year's Conference will be bigger and better than it has ever been before. We must say that we will gather in our thousands as we have never gathered before. You must ensure that this takes place. You must mobilise, mobilise and mobilise again. We as a Central Committee must encourage, encourage and encourage again.

We must carry our message to the people in every issue of 'Ilanga' between now and the Conference date. Every issue of 'Ilanga' should contain bold front-page commitments by Inkatha to remain Inkatha and to retain our place as a centre-stage political force of national importance. Each issue of 'Ilanga' must inform the people of what hideous violence the ANC, the UDF and COSATU are perpetrating against the people in their attempt to coerce regional and national support for their aims and objectives. We must expose, expose and expose again everything they do as they do it.

In addition I believe we must spread many, many hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of pamphlets over the whole of the Greater Durban Area and over the whole of the Pietermaritzburg Area informing people of the political facts of life. In these pamphlets we must inform them of Inkatha's resilient strength and that it will adamantly remain committed to the time-honoured values of the struggle. These pamphlets must boldly say no, never to the ANC, UDF, COSATU onslaught against Inkatha. It is vital that we plan a concerted information campaign and motivational campaign to off-set the hideous attacks that are now being prepared to annihilate Inkatha.

It is not only Inkatha that is the focal point of the attack. The attack is basically an attack against multi-Party democracy. The ANC just is so afraid of an Inkatha Party contender that it wants to annihilate Inkatha before it is forced to face Inkatha at the negotiating table and in elections thereafter. If Inkatha was nothing, it would be ignored. The ANC is afraid of Inkatha and it wants to destroy Inkatha because it is afraid of Inkatha.

The Inkatha that I know is there in the hearts and minds of the people will survive all onslaughts. There are areas where Inkatha is no longer visible but Inkatha is only invisible to those who cannot read the hearts and minds of people. In township after township, in area after area where the politics of intimidation has been so rife that Inkatha appears to have been the loser, the politics of violence perpetrated against Inkatha and the people has built up a rejection of the forces that produced the violence - the ANC, UDF, COSATU trio.

The time will yet come when the who's who of black politics is actually spelt out by people at ballot boxes in free and fair elections. It is so tragic that our political enemies intend to spill so much blood between now and then.

I therefore again say to Dr. Nelson Mandela that we must put aside all other considerations to keep the hope of democracy alive. I put it to Dr. Mandela that the campaign being mounted against Inkatha is a deliberately prepared formula for heightening tensions and increasing violence.

The time for the holding out of hands is always there. I hold out my hand of friendship to the ANC, as I hold it out to every organisation. But while I do so, I say enough is enough, Dr. Mandela. Get off your euphoria waves and condemn any intention to plan any act of coercion in the next three weeks of campaigning against Inkatha. Dr. Mandela, I say, unless you personally condemn road blocks and condemn picketing and condemn those who do not allow people to go to work when they want to go to work, or to go to a shop when they want to go to a shop, you are making yourself party to the hideously divisive onslaught against Inkatha in a Black-on-Black confrontation.

Worse than this, Dr. Mandela I say, if you do not now condemn the tactics and strategies in advance the blood that is spilt will be seen to flow around your feet. You will be responsible for whatever happens.

Dr. Mandela I say to you if you have any leadership capacity, now is the time to show it. Call a halt to the preparations for increased violence in the KwaZulu/Natal region. You are Deputy President of the ANC because Mr. Oliver Tambo is indisposed. You effectively hold the highest position in your organisation. Show the world that it is not kids dictating to you and that you do not have to run to the ANC for instructions from those whom you, as Deputy President, are supposed to be leading. Where is your leadership? Why is it that your organisation is plotting now to spill the blood that you as Deputy President of the ANC say is a tragedy?

You need, Dr. Mandela, to make very specific statements. You need to state that you condemn 'necklacing.' You need to state that you condemn anybody inside or outside your organisation which plans violence in the name of the ANC, the UDF or COSATU. I believe you owe it to your image and to the support that is being afforded to you because you have suffered on behalf of Black South Africa, to call all the leaders of the ANC, the UDF and COSATU around you and to stand up publicly and say to them: Stop the violence. Tell them all again publicly to throw their guns, knives and pangas into the sea.

I say to Dr. Mandela that at this year's Annual General Conference of Inkatha, I will be saying throw your guns, knives and pangas into the sea when I address Black South Africa. The Central Committee's call for the recussitation of the Joint Peace Committee is important and I will be addressing the issues involved. I will be telling the world what is actually happening.

I say to Dr. Mandela that I offer my hand of friendship and that I will be saying the kind of things in Conference this year which will expose him as a timid leader who cannot be trusted unless he takes effective steps to make his organisation and its allies stop killing for political purposes. Simply to turn around and blame others is just not good enough. Documentation will be ever-increasingly there for all who want to see it.

The violence thing will come home to roost in the ANC if Dr. Mandela does not take effective steps to bring about peace. It will tear away at the ANC's insides as the ANC prepares to hold its first South African Conference in 30 years when it meets in December. There will be violence amongst those who contend for positions of office inside the ANC. There will be violence in those vying to stake their claims to leadership positions.

Violence begets violence and revolutionaries are always displaced by counter-revolutionaries. There is always the endless cycle of violence and counter-violence once violence is used for political purposes. Let violence now stop in South Africa before it is too late.

Comrades, each and every one of you has a job to do in mobilising your constituencies. But over and above your own constituencies each and every one of you has an historically endorsed responsibility to mobilise Inkatha members and supporters wherever they are. Work with your colleagues at every level and mount a significant mobilising endeavour to make sure that this year's Conference is a magnificent success in showing that Inkatha is not crushed.

Comrades, we now come to looking at this year's Conference itself. It must be a gala affair. The launching of Inkatha as a national political Party is an historic event. There must be life, there must be glitter, there must be song and there must be colour. And I will ask our Comrade the National Chairman to report to the Central Committee on the progress that the Conference Committee he has been chairing has made in preparation for this important event.

Comrades, I can of course not let this opportunity go by without bidding our Secretary-General farewell. This is the last Central Committee that Dr. Dhlomo will be attending and I want to express myself very clearly on this occasion. The first thing I say is that I - and I am sure every one of us here - do wish Dr. Dhlomo everything of the best in whatever he decides to do. He came freely and he leaves freely. He has served freely and we freely thank him for the way in which he has served important Inkatha interests.

Dr. Dhlomo has headed teams the work of which has brought important dividends to Inkatha. He has been part of an Inkatha raising up faith and belief in the politics of negotiation which has been important for the whole of South Africa.

I express all our surprise at our Secretary-General's decision to go and to go now but on reflection I must say that if he was going to go at some time, then it would be better now than later.

Dr. Dhlomo has stated publicly that he does not intend leaving Inkatha to become involved in other Party political activity. He has given me his personal assurance that this is the case and at least we can be relieved that Inkatha's loss is not the ANC's gain.

The whole of South Africa is indeed in the melting pot and I have observed recently that it will be into that melting pot that Dr. Dhlomo will be going to do whatever he ends up doing. I think it is a truism that if the world is a small place as the saying goes, then South Africa and KwaZulu are minute. Our paths and the path of Dr. Dhlomo must continue to criss-cross and who knows what the future will bring.

Dr. Dhlomo, we will be formally saying good-bye to you when we host you at a farewell dinner on the 28th of this month. Now, however, from within the comradeship of the Central Committee we bid you farewell as you depart from the Central Committee and say thank you, Comrade, for what you have done for us while you were with us.

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